

ICC

tolls

too

much

—Andrews

By Alan K. Riewoldt
Sentinel
Editor

If it's cheap

It's what you get," said the

Montgomery County commissioner Pat Andrews (D-District 3) recently called the road "a bad deal

for taxpayers" after examining the es-

timated toll rates for the ICC.

"There are many reasons why

the ICC is a bad deal," said An-

drews. "The high tolls are one of

those reasons."

While exact toll rates have not

yet been established in the state's

Draft Environmental Impact State-

ment (DEIS), the various toll rates

studied for the ICC indicate that the

likely cost of driving on the road dur-

ing rush-hour traffic would range 17

cents per mile in 2004 to 2013, the

earliest year the ICC would open. The

anticipated cost will be 20 cents per

mile. That comes out to a \$7 per day

round-trip or to about \$1,700 per year

for a daily commuter.

The current national average for

a toll-road is 10 cents per mile ac-

cording to the Illinois State Toll Hwy-

way Authority.

The DEIS also shows that the

high toll rates could price as many as

10,000 drivers off the road per day.

"We are not conjecturing," said

Andrews. "We are reporting what

the state has published but is not

publicizing."

The ICC is so expensive just

according to the State Highway Admin-

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ICC *faces* *new* *hurdles*

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istration's ICC Web site, the road is expected to cost between \$1.8 and \$2.2 billion, but that the state claims it can't build it without the tolls," said Andrews.

Andrews continued to say that although the ICC is being proposed to relieve traffic congestion in the county, if the toll rates keep 11,000 drivers off the road per day then the ICC really is not fulfilling its proposed function.

Council Vice President Marilyn J. Prusner (D-District 4) also criticized the ICC and called it "a Lewis road-accessible to some" in a statement Andrews released on Dec. 27.

"This is a highway that the people are paying to build," Andrews said. "That's wrong. That's bad policy."

Andrews is urging residents to get involved in the political process and voice their opinions on the ICC.

"What people should do is contact state lawmakers and demand that tolls should be affordable to everyone who helped pay for the road," said Andrews.

To see a copy of the DEIS, visit www.icestudy.org. For more information on other state toll rates, visit www.corridorwatch.org/ttc/cw-tolls.htm.